

C L A I M S

1. An outdoor section for an air conditioner,
5 comprising:
a base;
a wrapper, said wrapper extending vertically
upward from said base to form an enclosure and including a
plurality of side panels supported by said base and a plurality
10 of corner panels supported by said base, at least one of said
panels and at least one of said corner panels being engaged in
a vertically sliding fit, said vertically sliding fit allowing
for relative vertical sliding movement between said at least
one of said side panels and said at least one of said corner
15 panels but preventing horizontal separation therebetween;
a heat exchanger coil, said heat exchanger
coil being disposed internal of said wrapper and disposed on
said base;
a top cover, said top cover overlying said
20 wrapper and having at least one opening.
2. The outdoor section of claim 1 wherein said
at least one side panel has a first edge and said at least one
25 corner panel as a mating edge, said first edge engaging said
mating edge in said vertically sliding fit.

3. The outdoor section of claim 2, wherein said first edge includes a plurality of protrusions that engage said mating edge to tighten said vertically sliding fit.

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4. The outdoor section of claim 3 wherein at least one of said plurality of protrusions extends from said first edge in a first direction and at least one of said plurality of protrusions extends from said first edge in a direction opposite said first direction.

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5. The outdoor section of claim 2 wherein said mating edge includes a plurality of protrusions that engage said first edge to tighten said vertically sliding fit.

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6. The outdoor section of claim 5 wherein at least one of said plurality of protrusions extends from said mating edge in a first direction and at least one of said plurality of protrusions extends from said mating edge in a direction opposite said first direction.

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7. The outdoor section of claim 2 wherein the first edge includes a plurality of protrusions and has a first and a second leg and wherein said mating edge is formed to capture said protrusions and both said first leg and said second leg so as to prevent horizontal movement of said first edge with respect to said within mating edge.

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8. The outdoor section of claim 1 wherein said at least one side panel defines an opening that receives a catch protruding from the base.

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9. The outdoor section of claim 8 wherein said first side panel defines a notch that receives an alignment tab extending from the base.

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10. The outdoor section of claim 1 wherein the first corner panel defines an opening that receives a catch protruding from the base.

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11. The outdoor section according to claim 1 wherein said base is fabricated from an engineered material and further comprising a radio frequency identification device, said radio frequency identification device being molded into said base.

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12. The outdoor section according to claim 11 wherein said radio frequency identification device is self-powered and transmits predetermined information relating to said outdoor section.

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13. The outdoor section for an air conditioner of claim 1 wherein said base includes at least one breakaway shipping tab extending integrally therefrom and further comprising a shipping pallet, said at least one tab being
5 attached to said pallet so that the severing of said breakaway shipping tab from said base facilitates the removal of said outdoor section from said shipping pallet.

10 14. The outdoor section for an air conditioner of claim 1 wherein said heat exchanger coil includes adjacent tube rows and further comprising a spacer, said spacer including an anchor and a head, said anchor being ensconced between said tube rows and said head juxtaposed one of said side panels so
15 as to maintain a predetermined distance between said side panel and said coil.

15 15. The outdoor section for an air conditioner of claim 14 wherein the spacer is a unitary plastic piece.

16. The outdoor section of claim 1 further comprising an orifice member, said orifice member defining an
25 orifice and being supported by said wrapper; a frame, said frame being fastened to said orifice member; a fan motor, said fan motor being fastened to said frame and said frame underlying and supporting said top cover; and, a fan, said fan being driven by said fan motor and being positioned in said
30 orifice to draw air through said orifice and to discharge air drawn through said orifice through said at least one opening in said top cover.

17. The outdoor section according to claim 1 wherein at least one of said plurality of side panels and one of said plurality of corner panels cooperate in the formation of a pinless hinge, said at least one of said plurality of said
5 side panels and said at least one of said plurality of corner panels which cooperate in the formation of said pinless hinge being other than said one of said plurality of side panels and one of said plurality of corner panels that are engaged in said vertically sliding fit, said at least one of said side panels
10 that cooperates in the formation of said pinless hinge having an edge which includes a first leg and a second leg formed in an L-shape, and wherein said corner panel which cooperates in the formation of said pinless hinge has a mating edge, said mating edge capturing said L-shaped edge of said side panel in
15 a manner which permits said side panel to swing outwardly and be removed from said wrapper so as to open the interior of said wrapper for access.

20 18. The outdoor section according to claim 1 wherein said base includes a surface, a resilient tab, a cleat and a post, at least one of said corner panels defining a slot and being secured to said base in a manner such that said cleat restrains horizontal movement of said corner panel across said
25 surface of said base in a first direction, said tab restricts movement of said corner panel across said surface of said base in a second horizontal direction and said post prevents the vertical separation of said corner panel from said base and protrudes through said slot defined by said corner panel.

19. An outdoor section for an air conditioner, comprising:

5 a base, said base being fabricated from an engineered material and having an integral peripheral rim extending upward therefrom and at least one integral lead-in which extends upward therefrom, said lead-in including a guide surface, said lead-in, said peripheral rim and the base comprising a unitary piece;

10 a heat exchanger coil having a lower surface which rests on said base; and

15 a side panel having a lower edge, said side panel being connected to said base and being interposed between said heat exchanger coil and said peripheral rim, said guide surface of said lead-in guiding at least one of said lower surface and said lower edge into a predetermined position with respect to said base during assembly of said outdoor section.

20 20. The outdoor section for an air conditioner of claim 19, wherein said base includes an integral coil ramp upon which said lower surface of said coil rests and wherein said lead-in is a coil lead-in, said guide surface of said coil lead-in extending above the lower surface of the heat exchanger coil when said coil rests on said base.

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21. The outdoor section for an air conditioner of claim 19, wherein said lead-in is a wrapper lead-in, said guide surface of said wrapper lead-in extending above the lower edge of the side panel when said side panel is connected to said base.

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22. The outdoor section for an air conditioner of claim 21, wherein said base includes a catch juxtaposed said wrapper lead-in and said side panel defines an opening, said catch protruding into said opening defined by the side panel so as to hold said side panel in place on said base and wherein said base includes an integral alignment tab extending upward therefrom and said side panel defines a slot, said alignment tab engaging said slot and cooperating with said wrapper lead-in and said catch to position and hold said side panel in a predetermined position on said base.

23. The outdoor section for an air conditioner of claim 19 wherein said base includes a radio frequency identification device, said device being molded into said base.

24. An outdoor section for an air conditioner, comprising:

- a base;
- a plurality of side panels connected to the base;
- a heat exchanger coil supported by said base and disposed in said wrapper;
- a plurality of corner panels, said plurality of side panels and said plurality of corner panels cooperating to form a wrapper, at least two of said corner panels and at least two of said plurality of said side panels having vertically running edges that are secured to each other in a vertical sliding relationship;
- an orifice member supported by said wrapper, said orifice member defining a fan orifice;

a frame connected to and supported by said orifice member;

a fan;

5 a fan motor fastened to said frame and to said fan, said fan being positioned to draw air through said wrapper, said coil and said fan orifice; and

10 a top cover, said top cover having a plurality of openings and being disposed above and supported by said frame, air flowing out of said orifice, past said frame and out of said openings when said fan is in operation.

25. The outdoor section for an air conditioner of claim 24, wherein the top cover is further supported by and
15 engages the orifice member.

26. An outdoor section for an air conditioner, comprising:

20 a base;

a plurality of sheet metal panels connected to the base to define a cabinet, said cabinet having an interior and an exterior, at least one panel of the plurality of panels defining a dimple adapted to receive a threaded
25 fastener, said at least one panel cooperating in the definition of a closed housing for electrical components and separating the interior of the cabinet from said housing for electrical components.

27. The outdoor section according to claim 26 wherein said at least one panel defines a plurality of dimples protruding toward the interior of said cabinet, at least one of said dimples being penetrated by a threaded fastener and at
5 least one of said dimples being closed.

28. A method of assembling a cabinet for an outdoor section for an air conditioner, wherein the cabinet
10 include a base, a first side panel, a second side panel, a third side panel, a first corner panel, a second corner panel, a third corner panel, and a fourth corner panel, the method comprising the following steps:

installing said first corner panel on said
15 base;

installing said second corner panel on said
base; and

sliding said first side panel vertically
downward into engagement with said base and with both said
20 first corner panel and said second corner panel.

29. The method of claim 28 further comprising the further step of installing said third corner panel on the base.
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30. The method of claim 29 further comprising the further step of sliding said second side panel vertically
downward into engagement with said base and with both said
30 second corner panel and said third corner panel.

31. The method of claim 30 further comprising the further step of installing said fourth corner panel on the base.

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32. The method of claim 31, further comprising the further step of sliding said third side panel vertically downward into engagement with said base and with both said third corner panel and said fourth corner panel.

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33. The method of claim 32 further comprising the further step of swingably engaging said fourth side panel with said first corner panel and then securing said fourth side panel to said fourth corner panel.

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34. The method of claim 32 further comprising the further step of sliding the fourth side panel vertically downward into engagement with said base and with both said first corner panel and said fourth corner panel.

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35. The method of claim 28 wherein said step of installing said first corner panel includes the step of slipping an opening in the first corner panel around a catch protruding from the base.

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36. The method of claim 35 further comprising slipping an opening in the first side panel around a catch protruding from the base.

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37. The method of claim 36 wherein the first side panel defines a notch and the base includes an alignment tab, and further comprising the step of sliding the notch onto the alignment tab.

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